

## **David L. Spencer**

September 2, 1951 – February 9, 2000

Graduated from Penn State

Doctoral work under Aldo Leopold

David L. Spencer  
Oral History Interview (#1)  
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Interviewed by Jim King

*[please note: Dave passed away February 9, 2000, before these tapes were transcribed and he had the opportunity to edit the draft]*

Jim: We are in Dave Spencer's home just off Huffman Drive in Anchorage. We just had a nice lunch. We are going to talk a little about the good old days of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Hi, Dave, I am really glad I was able to catch you here today. What I wanted to do is go right back to the beginning and I think that I know that you grew up in Pennsylvania. Is that right?

Dave: Yes, that is right. I came from Eastern Pennsylvania. I lived on a little farm there for the first few years, a place that I really loved. For whatever reason, we moved to the town of Media and lived there through high school until I went to the University. I was raised by my mother Ella Briggs Spencer and a Quaker foster family, the Horace Moores. Horace was superintendent of the Flexible Fire Plant in Philadelphia. When he retired, they went to his roots out on a farm and started farming in Chester Heights which was fairly close to one of his sisters. I was close enough that I went down there pretty often to her place. This involved kind of a trail through the woods for about half of it, which was kind of a nice trail. I think probably she influenced me to go to forestry school.

At any rate, college wasn't in the program for Quakers and the Moore family. Their son and daughter had gone to Westmont and it was assumed if you went to Westmont Boarding School, you were then educated. It was not in the cards for me to go as a foster child. I think my Aunt Clara kind of steered me into the direction of forestry work

because she lived in the woods. So, I talked about going to college and they said they could send me to the first year but after that I would be on my own. I applied and was accepted as a late entrant to the Forestry School in Southern Pennsylvania which was part of the Penn State complex. We studied forestry with a smattering of English. Mostly it was 100% forestry.

Jim: Did you have any wildlife aspects in the forestry school in those days?

Dave: It came into being as part of the forestry. One feature of this place was right along side a huge apple orchard and it extended for miles and they had the kind that were not good to eat. They were cooking apples. We would go out there and hunt quail.

Jim: I was going to ask you if you started hunting ducks as a boy or trapping muskrats or getting involved with wildlife or if that all came later.

Dave: I guess it came later. I went to the forestry school and they had various options. One of the options was forest wildlife. I thought that was for me. The professor by the name of Dean taught this. He didn't know what to teach and he talked about game farms where they raised pheasants for release and that kind of thing. I also got some other 'ology' things. This was in the mid-30's. I could see some of these forestry students going out into the CCC program.

We had a course in black-smithing, learning how to forge weld, which is fairly hard to do. Not many people can do it anymore. I took machine shop too. That was a long way from waterfowl.

I dropped out for a year and it was during the depression. You couldn't get a job. You couldn't get anything. People were on the streets selling apples. Finally I got a job cutting cordwood. I worked like a dog all day and you couldn't feed yourself on it but that is what I did all winter. I decided right then that this was no good so in the spring I took off. I had an old car and I went out west and stopped wherever I could see a

prospect of some work and some money. Somehow or another I got up the West Coast. Somewhere along the line I heard of the CCC which offered \$30.00 a month so I thought well, that is for me. I signed up on that. I was assigned to Camp Cain(?), in northwestern Pennsylvania. They quickly spotted me as a college pote so they gave me all the disagreeable chores they could find, mostly just washing dishes. They had a lot of dishes – 200 men! I was fast at that and the guys liked for me to do it because it would them a chance to goof off for a few minutes before somebody found them.

I went through that and thought, “hell, this is no good.” Somehow or another I acquired some money and I went to the University of Michigan, School of Forestry. I studied under Howard White and Sam Graham.

Jim: Howard White – was he the one that showed up at Oregon State later?

Dave: It was probably his son. It was kind of a group that we stayed in contact with. It was Howard Quick and the Craighead brothers. Sam Graham taught ecology which was way over my head most of the time. I could connect with what Howard White was teaching us.

Jim: Where did you take some statistics? Was that as a forestry student?

Dave: That was at Penn State in the forestry school there.

Jim: That was way ahead of anybody in the wildlife game. They weren't thinking about statistics were they?

Dave: We were thinking of going out and taking sample plots in a forest to measure how much timber was likely in the forest. We would take sample plots in different places and analyze these things to see what we had.

Jim: That wasn't something that wildlife managers were doing at the time.

Dave: No, I guess not. We weren't much in the way of wildlife managers.

Jim: Then after you got through with that, you worked for Fish and Wildlife a little while before World War II. Is that right? Were you involved with one of the refuges or some of them?

Dave: I was on the refuge out of Canterbury, North Dakota. It was one of those refuges right along the Canadian border. I went there for the summer and as I recall my chores involved cover mapping the refuge and I was caring for sick ducks that had botulism. I had a background in timber mapping that I had gotten up in Michigan. That is what I did there on the refuge and cared for those sick ducks.

Jim: Did you have a full time job with the Service before you went into the Navy?

Dave: No. I went into the Navy from the Missouri Conservation Commission. Somehow or another, I was with the Missouri Conservation Commission for two years with them.

Jim: What did you do for Missouri?

Dave: I was in a cooperative wildlife research unit in Columbia. Paul Dalky, I think, was the leader. He picked me up from Michigan and he sent me down to the Ozarks to study deer and turkey. There weren't many of either down there and that was the trouble, that's why I was there. They had shot up all the deer and all the turkeys. There wasn't much of either one left but there were some. Missouri had a lot of turkey farms that didn't really produce wild turkeys. They looked like wild turkeys but they didn't have that degree of wildness in them. They were farm turkeys.

I was stationed on the Skaggs Ranch. Skaggs, incidentally, is the guy who started Safeway stores. He had bought the Safeway Game Farm which was a 1400-acre

enclosure, enclosed with a barbed wire fence, 8 feet high. It was old rusty iron barbed wire. He had more deer than the place would hold and everything was browsed off as far as the deer could reach. He also had some bison in there and a few elk. He gave the Missouri Conservation Commission 50 deer a year.

One of my chores was to gather up these 50 deer. So I had to devise a way to catch these things. I made a couple of big box traps like a wooden rabbit trap where a rabbit goes into the box and follows the trail of bait. I had these boxes baited. They were about 4 feet square and about 20 feet long. I would bait them with corn and the idea was for the deer to go through there and when they started through there they would flip a trigger under their feet which would close the doors. One of the doors was fitted with a slotting arrangement where you could back a crate up to load the deer into the crate. I had the crate on a pickup and then I took them over to another part of the state. One of my colleagues there was Starker Leopold who was the son of Aldo. Starker was over there and we would release them in another wildlife refuge, Canning Mountain Refuge, I think it was called.

About that time the war broke out. I was a Quaker and had originally registered as a Conscientious Objector. The religion of the Quakers is you are guided by an Inner Light that told you when you needed to go. I suppose this came into me and I thought about it for quite a while. I thought this would not do and I was off to Japan and operated this huge military machine. When I signed up I thought I would only go as a foot soldier. I signed up for the aviation program. I headed for the Kansas City Recruiting Office. They overlooked all this business and I guess they hadn't met their quota so they signed me up right then. This was for the Navy. Then I had to wait for some time before a space became available for me. Everybody wanted to be a flyboy.

Jim: Missouri now has lots of deer and turkeys. That work that you were in on right from the beginning was really successful.

Dave: Yes, I think so. When I left Missouri I completed a huge enclosure where I had planned to take these wild captured turkeys and put them in there and raise a stock of many wild turkeys. I had cut a tremendous number of cedar posts.

I received a train ticket telling me to go to pre-flight school at Mt. Alto in Oakland. That was just a standard boot camp. They put you through all the things to try and wash you out and see just how tough they can make it for you. It was kind of like Jay Hammond's experience. I wasn't like Jay Hammond however, marching the troops up and down with great precision. I could barely get the platoon to the mess hall. We had to march in formation everywhere. I was no good at that.

Jim: Well you passed all that then they sent you to flight training.

Dave: Yes, they sent me for flight training which went on for 9 months. You are scared every day. This was in Long Beach, California. I finally got to Corpus Christi. I went through primary in California because I remember I went through the pre-flight and primary. Primary involved flying Steerman's. That sticks in my mind because I remember the night flying in these Steerman's with the search lights back and forth. We were scared to death the Japanese were going to land any time. The Steerman's were open cockpit, two place seats. They would do almost anything an airplane could do except an outside loop.

I remember once I was up and the instructor says, "well, O.K. do me an inverted falling leap." That's where you take the thing up into a stall and then you fall off in one leap on one wing and then the other in a stall attitude. He wanted me to do this upside down. I said, "well, sir, I haven't had that yet." He went into a great furry, grabbed the stick, banged my knees with it and pointed the thing straight down to the ground and we went roaring down and leveled off at about 10 high above an outlying field. He should have been a fighter pilot rather than an instructor. I mustn't get into that military stuff. Then came time to get out of that.

By this time, my old friend Starker Leopold, was down in Mexico working for the Pan American Union. He invited me to come down there when I got released from the Service and so I did. I went down to Mexico City and we went on down from there.

Jim: Now, before we get too far from the Navy – when did you get started with the amphibians?

Dave: I never did. I pulled a brief hitch of instructing in formation flying with SM-J's(??) and then I went to the PBY Squadron and I instructed in PBY's. It took 20 hours of dual instruction before they would let us solo a PBY. Then they sent two of us up at one shot. I instructed PBY's for a long time, at least a year or more.

Jim: Did you have your students doing spins and stalls and loops and all these other things that PBY's are supposed to be able to do?

Dave: No. I had them doing some strange maneuvers. There was one part they called “bouncing” where you would go out and run across the bay, one landing right after the other. That went on for a long time. They had these old PBY derelicts in the fleet that were pretty well worn out. The rivets were popping out and they hadn't been taken care of very much. We used those for bouncing.

We had patrol assignments about once a week where we would have to go out on a segment and search for submarines. You had to identify all the ships that were there so you had to flash these lights at them. They would flash some lights back at you and look in their code and see if that was the proper code for that day. It was the co-pilot's duty to gather up this code and make sure everything was in order.

Jim: You didn't get to Alaska with the PBY's?

Dave: No. Before I got out of the military, I got into PBM's. I spent quite a bit of time in PBM's which was a very good airplane. Our service didn't use them very long. They

quickly shifted to land based patrol planes in the Pacific. My son tells me that the Soviets still use a version of the PBM with much larger engines. They still use those for patrolling.

Jim: Well the PBY was a good airplane in its time.

Dave: There were many more PBY's than PBM's. I think there were 3500 of them. They were used by several Services; the Canadian Service, the English Service, some countries in South America. I once had to instruct a bunch of South American pilots in flying the PBY's. That was just before the War ended. They suddenly discovered that I wasn't doing anything and before they would release me, they had me instructing South Americans. We had an interrupter that went along.

Jim: Then you got out of the Navy and you went off to Spanish America with Starker? Did you run into any of your old pilots down there?

Dave: No. Starker had persuaded me that I should go study under his father for awhile so I presented myself there at the University of Wisconsin. Finally he looked over my graduate school records and in there I had a course in plant physiology. At that time I was in Michigan and I was taking this civilian pilot training course which took an ungodly amount of time. I had robbed that from taking this plant physiology course and as a result I just went to the lab. I wound up with a D- and that isn't very good on your graduate school record. They looked at this when I presented myself at Wisconsin. They said, "well, we will let him in but not as a candidate for a degree." So I went to study under Professor Leopold. I very quickly discovered that he was there at work at 7:00 in the morning. I thought, well, if that's the way he does it, that's the way I'll do it. So, I would go there at 7:00 in the morning and read from his very extensive wildlife library. Everything was published and I would read and read and read.

Then came spring and I got restless from all this academic stuff and I thought I had to get out of there. I took off in a decrepit old car and went West. I wound up in Jackson Hole.



I guess Professor Leopold had given me a letter to go visit Olaus Murie, so I went to see him. I stayed there on his ranch for some time. The Craighead's were there. They were working on a flower book for the T-John(?) Park, I think. I had applied to the Wyoming Game Commission and they took me on under the PR program as the big game leader. They told me that my first chore was to operate the check stations. The check stations were scattered all over that part of the State. They involved employing local people to man these stations. It almost drove me crazy. I would have to run from one place to the other and back and forth to these stations. I had to keep hiring people to keep them manned. It almost drove me nuts. I finally got through that. My application under the PR program had gone through the Fish and Wildlife Service. I guess they looked at it and said, this is a guy that we need so they sent me an offer.

Mr. Bagley, who was head of the Wyoming Game Commission, a political appointee, I said, "Mr. Bagley, I have this offer and I have to go." He said, "I wish you well" and off I went. I went down to Chicago. They told me my first chore there was to go down and get this airplane that they had just acquired from the Coast Guard and take that and go down to Mexico. I went down there. John Ball was the Service's chief pilot then. We went down to Birmingham, Alabama, for some strange reason. That was the place where the surplus Wigeon was. It was only a couple of years old. It had been through an overhaul there. We jumped in this thing and John, being the chief pilot, was going to check me out. He was an old Navy pilot too. I wound it up and went careening down the runway from side to side, and I thought, "oh my God, I can't fly anything like this." Fortunately, he brought it to a halt before we got in the air. I discovered they had rigged the rudders backwards! We got it back to the shop and they straightened that up.

We took off from there and went to Chicago first and then Denver. Somewhere along the line, I was to pick up George Saunders, which turned out to be in Brownsville, Texas. We went through Denver and stayed there overnight. I taxied out on the runway the next morning and at that time, Denver didn't have much of an airfield. I only went half way down to midway and lined up and the tower said; "don't you want the rest of the

runway?” I said “no.” I had been used to this business in the Navy where you were only allowed to use half of the runway, the other half being used by planes landing.

I took off there and just barely cleared a bunch of wires at the far end, and I thought, “oh, my God, this isn’t working too good.” I went steaming across there for Albuquerque. I had to go over a high ridge which would severely tax this thing. I got over that and landed there at Albuquerque and a tire blew out. The plane had old World War II tires on it. This thing careened off the runway. That was a military post and the military boys came out and said, “worry not, we’ll fix it for you.” They set upon it, these big guys with their sledgehammers. They busted the wheel. I looked all around. The nearest wheels were in New York. I had to send back there for the wheel. I waited for two weeks before that darn thing got there.

Albuquerque had kind of a World War II bone yard. I looked over thousands and thousands of WWII airplanes in the scrap yard. They had everything in there you could think of except a Wigeon. I was there over Christmas. Finally, my wheel came and I got it put back on carefully. I took off late in the evening and got down there somewhere in the panhandle. I thought I would stay there for the night. The next morning, it was very cold. The engines weren’t about to start. Finally, I borrowed a little gas heater from a farmer there. I finally got both engines going. I took the heater back to the farmer. Again, it was getting late in the day when I took off and I think I went to El Paso and spent the night. The next morning, it was the same thing. There they had facilities to warm up the engines.

There was a Navy pilot there with an F6-F. These things had huge radial engines, just tremendous engines. We finally got both our airplanes heated up. I flew from there to Corpus Christi to the Air Force base. I still had some connections there so I went in and I told them my plane had this and that the matter with it and could they help me with it. They assigned a crew of Swabbies. They did all kinds of things to it, including furnishing me a new battery. After they did their thing, they turned me loose.

I left and went on to Brownsville where I was to meet George Saunders for this aerial survey in Mexico. George was in the midst of marital difficulties. He and his wife parted company there. We took off and we went all the way down to the Panama. From there, we flew through the Canal Zone. I had read about the protocol coming into it. You had to go a certain way, give certain recognition's, etc. We went over to Baji. They had a big parcel of lagoons there. We saw the whales and the Brant. It was interesting for us.

Jim: Was that the first record of Brant down there that anybody had reported?

Dave: I don't know; maybe it was. I know we were surprised to find them. George had covered Mexico pretty much by car as much as he could. I think he was a flyway biologist. He still lives in Florida.

In the course of our travels down there, George had a mission in Guatemala and that was to make a cursory survey of their wildlife habitat. We flew over to Guatemala and we stayed there a month. We flew back and forth making a rough sketch of their wildlife habitat. Guatemala is very mountainous and it kind of taxed the capacity of our little Wigeon. While we were there, George made the acquaintance of a lady named Doris. She was a botanist with the Pan American Union, I think. Finally, I realized that George didn't care whether we left there or not. Guatemala City is on a plateau; it sticks right up there. Finally, they got to going together.

We did the count again the following year. They said, "well, you didn't count enough birds, so go on back and do it again." George said, "I'm not well, I can't make another trip there." So, Bob Smith came into the picture. He and I did the survey. We got to Mazuran and coming up the other side he said, "I think I'm getting flight fatigue, maybe we had better lay up here a day or two." We did that. We got a nice room overlooking the Bay.

We discovered that we could engage a guy to take us marlin fishing. He had a little cabin cruiser, about 30 feet long. We went out and people hadn't caught any marlin in a long time. Well, we got three of those things. They were huge marlin. I still have a picture of Bob standing along side one and it reaches way up over his head.

--end of Side A, Tape 1—

--start of Side B, Tape 1—

Jim: Was Bob a pilot at that time?

Dave: Yes, this was the first trip to Mexico with him. Bob had been surveying in the Prairie Provinces with a single engine airplane. It may have been a Nuttle-5(?) – one of those surplus two-place rigs.

I was assigned to the Everglades in Florida. The refuge supervisor was delighted to have me come down there so he would have his personal pilot to fly him all around the refuges. I went through almost all the refuges in the southeastern United States. I was there in South Florida, in the Miami area and they wanted Bob Smith to use his Wigeon to fly up North. They sent him down to have me check him out in the Wigeon. We did this and I had a lot of fun with him. We used these old World War II fields that had been abandoned and we used them for practice. We would go careening off through the weeds in this Wigeon.

One time he decided to fly out to Fort Jefferson, which was off Key West. We took off from Key West and flew out to the West there, then on out to Fort Jefferson. This was a Civil War Fort that they built but never completed. There were millions of bricks – a 2-story fort completely occupied this little chunk of ground. It had this sort of an abode around it. We landed there. They hardly ever got any visitors. It was a national monument. They welcomed us and they took us barracuda fishing. Those barracuda are pretty fast acting fish. You throw something overboard and they have it right now. You are in business and you've got a 5-foot fish there that is as ferocious as all could be.

We left there and Bob went on up to Canada with the Wigeon.

Jim: At that time, the Service was convinced that you needed twin engines to fly in the north.

Dave: I worked in Manitoba for a summer out of the Delta Waterfowl Research Station. Mostly I flew an L-5 which we would land on a grass pasture there close to Delta. Al Hokebaum(??) was holding fort then. I had just gotten married and that was in 1948. He fixed up an old cabin there and that was where Eloise and I had our first home. It was kind of on a spit. It was kind of an interesting place. We had no water. We had to drive several miles across country and fill up barrels in the back of a pickup. Half of it slouched out before we got back. That was our water supply.

I thought the thing to do with this pothole country was to take photographs of it and get some idea of the extent of the potholes. I photographed about 100 square miles.

Jim: You used an old military aerial camera?

Dave: Yes. I calculated how far up we should be to get such and such an area. It was somewhere around 11,000 feet, which I don't know how I ever got up there. I was dressed for the warm prairie down below and I almost froze to death before we would get back down again.

There was a fellow by the name of Bill Karik(??) who was a commercial photographer. He went along to operate the camera.

Jim: You know, Bill Karik(??) was one of the people in Canada that started this business of geese following ultra light airplanes, and then swans. First, he got them following his boat in the lake and he figured if he could teach them to follow a boat, it would be possible to teach them to follow an ultra light airplane. He and Harry

Lumston(?) and Bill Sladen and a guy Lishman(?) had been dabbling in this ultra light business for several years. They don't get along with each other. They put each other down terribly but they are all contributing to this new game. Bill Karik(?) has been coming to the Trumpeter Swan Society Meetings.

Dave: This crew there at Delta included Al Hockbaum(?) who wrote *Canvass Back on a Prairie Marsh*. There was also Art Hawkins there. Lyle Sowls, and Peter Ward were part of the crew. Peter Ward is still there. I think he is the manager. Al Hockbaum is deceased. I have a photograph of the whole crew lined up there.

We made a photograph of this 100 square miles and kind of pieced the whole thing together and nothing ever came of it. We just looked at it ourselves and said, "well, yes, there are a lot of pot holes there."

The second year we moved over to Saskatchewan and we were stationed there in a couple of places. I worked with Johnny Lynch quite a bit. Johnny was a biologist from the Mississippi Delta country.

Jim: I thought that Johnny Lynch, as much as anybody, could think like a duck. Is that a good description of him?

Dave: That could be. He worked up here in Alaska one time. He knew Charlie Gilliam, who was one of the early guys up here.

Jim: I think they worked together on the McKenzie.

Dave: It was an interesting place. We would have a party and we would get a burlap sack full of fresh oysters and a case of beer. We would shuck these oysters and drink beer. That was pretty good but some aspects of the Delta country were pretty tough. Some of the people from the bayous there were kind of a different race. We were down

there over Christmas once. Everybody would get drunk and they would get to fighting among themselves.

Johnny and I decided that we would get out of this for a while. We ran a trapline down in the bayous. I worked with Johnny in Canada and one summer we were trying to work out a certain sampling method. I thought we could lay out plots and survey them. You could then stratify the country into different degrees and population according to what your transects would show.

Jim: It's my impression that they were trying to do these very long transects with automobiles at one time in the prairies but they didn't segment them. That was where they came up with the  $1/8^{\text{th}}$  mile transect width. Would that have been you and Johnny who started cutting them into segments so you could do the sampling procedures?

Dave: Yes. We cut them into 16-mile transects which gave us four square mile samples for each 16 miles. We tried to lay out these segments on a random selection system. Also, we had an awful lot of place-to-place flying so we divided those into 16 mile transects.

The second year, a guy by the name of Floyd Thompson worked with me on that. This was in 1948. We would go out early in the morning and fly these transects from place to place. We would try and work in these randomly selected transects and come back in and figure the thing all out in long hand. We would then apply a statistical analysis to try to figure out a sampling error in it. We worked very hard at this and I guess we may not have accomplished very much but it sure tired us both out.

Jim: Well, you developed a system that has been used ever since!

Dave: J. Clark Salyer, Chief of Refuges, called me into his office. He said, "I'm sending you up to be manager of the Kenai National Moose Range."

Jim: Why did you want to come to Alaska?

Dave: I don't know. Just a place to go, I guess. I wanted to go. Dick Griffith was one time Regional Director in Portland. Eloise and I drove up the highway in our old Hudson. Later, John Ball flew the Wigeon up. Salyer told me to take the Wigeon with me to Alaska so John Ball flew it up. He didn't much care. He flew all the way to Amchitka in that thing.

We lived in the old game commission house there in Kenai. John had stopped along the way back somewhere and caught this trout. He brought it to us. About that time, we had this oil range that blew up and spoiled his fish. He said, "I think you had better replace this stove here!" We did get a new stove a little later.

Jim: He was always involved with the flying operation of the Service too. He was the chief pilot for the Service. I remember him being in Alaska during the search for Clarence Rhode.

Dave: He passed away at a fairly early age. I didn't even know he was gone.

Jim: When you became Refuge Manager in Kenai, you worked with Clarence Rhode on a variety of schemes for the expansion of refuges.

Dave: Clarence's approach wouldn't be welcomed in this day and age. I guess his solution to the wolf problem was to shoot them. I sent Burkholder and Jay Hammond up on the North Slope to get those darn wolves. He felt refuges were a good thing and he was promoting the Arctic Range when he lost his life. He tried to get over a pass which wasn't clear enough and he banged into the top of it. He wasn't discovered until 21 years later. At the time, we mounted the largest search that had ever been put on for an aircraft. All this flying back and forth, back and forth, each of us with a little quadrant map.



Jim: That was quite a dramatic event. My impression is that Rhode, Bud Boddy and you really put together the proposals for Izembek, Yukon Delta. Is that right? Did you know Bud Boddy? He was the National Director for the Wildlife Federation for awhile there. I think he was promoting Alaska Refuges through that direction.

Dave: He may have been, I can't really recall. I do recall that somewhere along the line, I was called on to identify important wildlife areas in Alaska. I laid them out on a map just including the areas that I felt were of greatest importance. They were fairly small and I thought we could justify these. I had been through many long years where we had to fight to keep anything you had. It scared me. I made my identifications very limited and along comes ANILCA. They expanded these to include all kinds of things. The Yukon Delta Refuge, I don't know how big that thing is now, but it is big. So is the Arctic Range. It was expanded several times its size. This was way beyond my thinking. It was kind of a politically motivated thing, I guess. There must have been some sort of a deal with the oil companies.

Shortly after I came here, I was sent out to the Innoko to band some ducks. I went out there and I looked around a bit and I thought if you want to band a bunch of birds, we should go out on the coast there and band some of the geese. I think I left Dave Hooper there at Holy Cross to see if he could do anything with these ducks. There was no boat there and we had to get someone to build us a boat. He did that. Ed Chatelaine was there and they fooled around a bit but I guess they couldn't band anything.

Jim: Wasn't Chatelaine, Sig Olson, Bob Scott, Jack Paniyak and that crew involved there? I got an hour tape last year with Jack Paniyak and he was telling some of the stories about the banding program. He was talking about Dr. Ray Hawk.

Dave: I went out there and they said they found a boat at a warehouse at Pilot Point. I finally found this so-called collapsible boat. It was a piece of canvas about the size of a bed with a bunch of wire ribs for it. I took one look at that and I knew immediately that I wasn't going to go to sea in that thing! I carefully wrapped it up and handed it back to

the fellow and went on my way. There was nobody at Chevak that could speak English. I did get Charlie Peterson, the storekeeper there, who could speak a little English, to go along with me to interpret. Somehow we engaged a guy from Aniak. We got our hands on a big wooden riverboat, about 30-feet long. I tied up the Wigeon to the bank there at Chevak and threw an anchor out in midstream. We loaded all our junk in that boat and off we went. We set up camp and we did get a few birds banded. At that time, I think there were many more birds than there are now. The coast is eroding and I think the habitat that we had at that time is no longer there. It is gone.

We got way down there and we couldn't find any water to drink. This fellow came up river towing a dead walrus. It turned out that he was deaf and dumb but we made signs and finally he knew we wanted water. He took us up river a little ways and we walked off in the tundra and he showed us a fresh water pond.

Jim: We talked about him with Jack Paniyak and got his name. When I was out there, he would stop in for a cup of coffee pretty regularly. He was really articulate with his hands. He could tell hunting stories and tales of great trauma. You could get what he was describing just with his hands. He could describe all the different geese and ducks.

Dave: I think a lot of those birds are gone now, due to loss of habitat and loss of birds. There are so many more people out there than there used to be.

Jim: They have better motors and 3-wheelers that they can carry in their boats so they don't have to hike across the tundra anymore.

Dave: When I first went into Chevak, there were just a few houses, those underground things. The last time I went in there, it was a huge village.

Jim: The village moved over to where it is now because the BIA wouldn't build a school at Old Chevak. There was no place that they thought was suitable. That's why they had moved there in the first place. They didn't ask first if that was a good place and

they went ahead and built all their barabara's and the Catholics built a church and then BIA came in and told them they had to move again if they wanted a school. So, they did. They left the church, which has served the Fish and Wildlife Service well ever since.

I don't know why I look back and remember you being an advocate for these refuges and encouraging your refuge managers, particularly, Will Troyer, myself, and probably others to think about new refuges. You also kept us advised that as long as Senator Gruening was in Washington, we probably wouldn't get any. You and Clarence had done a lot of thinking about new refuges that Alaska ought to have.

Dave: Yes, we had a whole list of them. Dave Hickok was in on this during the ANILCA.

Jim: But going back before the Arctic and Izembek – there was some kind of nature reserve established by Teddy Roosevelt on the Yukon Delta that was abolished by Warren Harding. Did you ever find any data on that or any of the details on that?

Dave: I may have. I have a big pile of that stuff now. I spent a week in Denver once going through the Fish and Wildlife files there of old historic records. If you want to go into the history of the waterfowl reserves out there, you have to go back. E.W. Nelson eventually became the Chief of the Bureau. I think he may have recognized the importance of this first.

Kodiak and Kenai refuges were pretty much set up by the intervention of Caberson(??) through his travels up here and he saw the importance of them. The Kenai dates back to a forester by the name of Languill(??) who withdrew a huge area on the Kenai. This was before Andy Simon's time. I think it was kind of a one-man forestry service. He walked all over the place. That's where Teddy Roosevelt would have gotten the idea for an Executive Order.

Jim: Well, Dave, we have been at this almost two hours. You think we should take a break and pick this up later? Let's retire for today. I do have some more questions that I wanted to ask you but maybe we could get together later in the week.

Thank you. It is really nice to hear you clarify some of these things about the past that we wonder about. It is wonderful to hear about these people like Leopold, and Hawkbaum. Those people are legends now.

Dave: We even had an English ecologist, Fraser Darling. He and Leopold went out to Nunivak. Running down the waterfowl history of the western coast is quite a chore. It takes a lot of digging to find it all.

--end of Side B, Tape 1—

--start of Side A, Tape 2—

Jim: October 27, 1999 – we are resuming the interview with Dave Spencer—in his living room in Anchorage looking out at a lot of fresh snow. It is a little more wintry than it was a couple of days ago. Dave covered a lot of the things you did in the prairies and the military but not so much after you got to Alaska. My memory was that you started as a refuge manager but almost immediately you got sent all over the place doing air surveys for moose, ducks, musk oxen, and gosh knows what all. You were in quite a demand for a while.

Dave: I was sent up here in 1948 as the Refuge Manager of the Kenai National Moose Range. I made some waterfowl surveys and other surveys in 1950. They wanted me to be the Refuge Supervisor for Alaska. I continued in that capacity for about 26 years. It was 1976 when I left.

Jim: At the time when you first came, how many refuge managers were there?

Dave: At that time, there was Frank Bealls who held the fort out in the Aleutians, in Kodiak. He had part of his refuge, the Aleutians, occupied by the Japanese forces in WWII. Doug Gray was still around but he felt the Washington Office had not treated him very good. When he left the Service, he operated a hotel in Juneau, the old Juneau Hotel. That belonged to his family. That is torn down now.

Jim: So it would have been just you and Frank Bealls as the refuge staff when you first arrived? Then did you hire Bob Jones?

Dave: Bob and I came at the same time, in 1948. He was assigned to the Aleutians, I think. Izembek had not come into being at that time. Bob had experience in the Aleutians during WWII. He was a radioman at a far out post.

Jim: Well, the Service got him a few old buildings to live in out there. He stayed there for quite a while in Cold Bay.

Dave: Yes. He had one of those old WWII huts there at Cold Bay. There were several of them there in a row, right adjacent to the airfield. Bob's quarters consisted of one big room and a kitchen. Most of the big room was occupied by a big box that had home brew in it. Plus he had ducks and feathers in there. He would pluck the ducks and throw them in the oven and cook them up. They were pretty good.

Jim: Then after you became the supervisor, you really put together a great team of refuge people in the next few years.

Dave: Yes. I got quite a few people – Cal Lensink, John Hakala, Dick Hensel, Will Troyer, and yourself. All were great people and did good jobs. Will Troyer and Dick Hensel presided at Kodiak. One was the refuge manager and the other assistant refuge manager. They kind of pioneered this business of instrumenting bear, actually before the Craighead's did. A lot of this didn't come out until later when they told me about it.

They would catch these bear in a padded trap that was on a toggle so it was free to move a certain amount, but not very fast. Then they would go along with a pole with a syringe on the end of it and it had a tranquilizer on it. They would poke the bear in the rear with that thing. Eventually the bear would be tranquilized and they would put a collar on it and take all the measurements and whatever else they needed to do. One time they had gotten a cub in the trap and the mama was right there in the bushes and she was furious. She took a swat at Troyer and he climbed up a tree. It wasn't much of a tree and as he got up there a ways, the thing broke and he fell out of the tree right on top of the bear. That was at Karluk Lake.

Jim: Somewhere in that period you started doing the musk ox counts at Nunivak.

Dave: In 1949, I think. I did that for quite a long period of years. We were having trouble with the musk ox disappearing and they weren't doing very well out there. I would go out and survey them, very religiously, to find every last one. I think I wrote that up with Cal Lensink.

Jim: Yes, the records of those counts are available now. You were documenting really that they were in fact increasing. Now they are all over the place. I have been up on the North Slope doing bird counts the last few years. There are little bands of musk ox from Nunivak all over the place up there. They were planted in the Arctic refuge but they have moved way west from there now.

Dave: I remember one of them moved all the way over the Range south of the mountains. Some guy shot one that he thought was a bear.

Jim: Somewhere in that period, you got to working on refuge proposals with Clarence Rhode for the Arctic, Izembek, and the Yukon Delta. Didn't you do a lot of the original reports on those areas and Clarence was off politicking with them?

Dave: We had a couple of influential people that Clarence and I were going to show around the potential refuge areas in Alaska. One of them was Pink Guttermuth(??) from the Wildlife Management Institute. Another was a military man and the other was Clarence's son. I had been chauffeuring somebody around there on the West Coast there and I was to meet Clarence in Fairbanks and go around the Arctic again.

I got there and he didn't show up and for a couple of days he didn't show up. I thought this was unusual so I declared him missing. Then the search for him began. That search went on for a month until we got forced out by snow. We never could find him until 21 years later. The remains of the airplane showed up. He just apparently tried to clear a ridge in the Arctic Range to get back south. He didn't clear it and he banged into it instead.

They had this search where we would each go out, pilot and co-pilot and we would search this area very minutely. It was all done probably two-three times and we found nothing. We finally gave it up.

Jim: People have always assumed that Clarence was flying but in the accident report when they finally found the airplane, they found a pistol belt in the left seat and Woolford said, "well, Clarence never wore a pistol but Fredrickson did." That opened up the question of perhaps Clarence had gotten sick or something and Fredrickson was trying to get him out of there in a plane that he wasn't really qualified to fly. I guess that is one of those things that there is a variety of theories on and no way to have a true answer. A lot of people don't like to think that Clarence just made a dumb mistake. He didn't make dumb mistakes. At least, we didn't feel he did.

Dave: Clarence was a very smart man. He was a real support of refuges.

Jim: There was a lot of popular support for getting rid of wolves then. People forget how much support there was for that policy. Trappers would come into the office there in Fairbanks. If they had a wolf on their trap line, the wolves would learn how to crop.

They would follow the trapper around and every time he got something in his trap the wolf would eat it. Guys would come in with tears in their eyes because they had lost their winter's fur and wanted to know what the Game Commission could do about it. They would send Frank Glaser and Joe Meiner out. People have forgotten how concerned people were about wolves.

Dave: As I told somebody, the solution to the wolf problem up here in Alaska was to shoot them. That is about what happened for a long time.

Speaking of Frank Glaser, I read his book that he and Jim Reardon put together. It was pretty interesting. That fellow was a modern-day mountain man. He would have fit right in that era around 1825. Mountain men were running all over by themselves, surviving off the country.

Jim: I don't know anybody that could take off on foot with just a little bit of gear and travel for days. Nobody travels like that anymore. He used to talk about how in the summertime, he didn't carry a tent but he did carry a mosquito net.

Tell me a little bit about Jim Peterson. He was your assistant wasn't he?

Dave: No, when they told me they were sending me to Alaska they told me they had hired a local man to be my assistant. When I got up here, I met him. Jim had a wildlife degree from Fort Collins, University of Colorado. He was very easygoing, too easy, in fact. I think that may have been his downfall. We had this 15-foot fiberglass skiff that was kind of an accident looking for a place to happen. It had a low transom on it. We had a huge 22-horse powered military outboard with a big iron ring around it. I figured it had been something used to move barges with.

He went down to the Kenai River for some reason and of course, Skilak Lake gets furious winds from the east. Once when he was down there, one of these winds came up. The lake gets very rough. It is more than you can manage in even an adequate boat. I think



he set out from the mouth of the River to get back to the landing. It was about a mile and a half. They would have to go through the roughest part of this water. Jimmy was brought up in boats. He knew all about them. He was also so easy going. My theory is that he turned the tiller over to his helper who didn't know a darn thing about boats. They hit a wave wrong, swamped and flipped the boat. Nothing was ever found except a couple of gas cans. We looked and looked. The bodies were never recovered.

Jim: When I was in Kenai a year or so ago, I noticed they have a little marker I think on the Peterson house. I think it would be appropriate to have one somewhere on the refuge.

Dave: There is. We had it there on Hidden Lake campground. It was a bronze plaque. The marker was for the two of them. The office called me once and asked what I thought about the marker and what should we do with it. I told them, "contact Jimmy's family to see if they had any preference." He only had a sister and a brother-in-law. We told them we had an alternative and that was we could bring it back here to the visitor's center. Otherwise, it would be vandalized or stolen if it was left out there. It is probably in the Visitor's Center now there in Soldotna.

Jim: When I started working there in Kenai, Jim Peterson was a big help. You were out flying all the time. You didn't help me at all! Jim kind of straightened me out on what the Fish and Wildlife Service was all about and what was going on in Kenai. I really felt bad when I learned that he had drowned.

Dave: I think at that time, it was Mrs. Robinson that held the fort. When they first sent me up here, they told me to go down to Kodiak and get some of those surplus pacific huts and set them up at Kenai for quarters for your assistant, a garage, office, etc. At that time, Jimmy's brother-in-law was operating a barge on the Inlet. He had agreed to pick that stuff up along with a lot of other things too. I think there were a couple of surplus trucks and other junk from the Navy base down at Kodiak. They loaded all this stuff up on a barge and sent it to Kenai for \$1800 which I thought was pretty high.

Jim: I remember that little building was kind of a neat thing. You built a little square frame and then had these Quonset huts sticking out of it in four different directions.

Dave: That was something designed down in Washington. It was almost impossible to fit those things together in a cross. What a nightmare that was. Somehow or the other, we got it together.

Jim: Well, those huts served well for a number of years.

Dave: One hut was used to house the light plane. Amongst all this surplus junk from Kodiak, was a huge 6-cylinder gasoline generator, brand new, parts and all. That came also. It would generate a lot of electricity. Before that, we had a 1-cylinder device that had a little generator on it. It had a little gas tank that would run about two hours and then you would have to run out and fill it up again. It had a rope start on it. It wasn't a very good thing. Then we got this big generator. It was always kind of a contest on who would go out and start this thing in the morning - would it be Jimmy or would it be me. Each other tried to outweigh the other.

I lived there in the Game Commission's quarters that had been built in 1935. It had some sort of plumbing in it but not very good. It had a sand point for water. It had two barrels up in the second story that I would fill up with a hand pump. Then it would dribble down through this plumbing into the kitchen. The first chore in the morning was to fill these two barrels. It was a standard water pump with a big handle on it. By the time I got through pumping these two 50-gallon barrels full of water, I was just mad as I could be. It wasn't a very good system. We lived in that house for five years.

Jim: You had babies then so you needed lots of water.

You were going to tell me a little bit about working with Ed Chatelaine. I know that he was a powerful personality. People still talk about Ed Chatelaine. I didn't know him well because I was never in Anchorage.

Dave: He didn't live very long. He died of a heart attack at age 37. He was wise beyond his years. One thing I recall about Bob Scott and Ed Chatelaine. Scott, he always knew everything, you know. He got into statistics. Ed was in a huff and said "he's not going to Lord it over me" and he went out and got a statistics book and studied that. We tried to figure out stuff from that on applying statistics to these surveys.

Jim: I remember in the early 1950's the number of agents that were doing duck surveys in the spring and then I guess Pete Nelson would put together a report for the Patuxent Office. I think they were well set up and some of those transects are still in the survey deal. The game agents that did them were a pretty harem-scarem bunch. Were you involved in setting up those?

Dave: I was involved over in Canada in the Prairie Provinces. Manitoba didn't lend itself too well to that but Saskatchewan did. We tried to set up a sampling arrangement. You see, I'm a professional forester so I knew all about sampling so I set up sampling plots.

Jim: You told me about this the other day but in Alaska, you were the only one that knew anything about setting up duck sampling transects. It has been interesting. Now it is getting to be almost 50 years for those surveys and they have stood the test of time.

Dave: One thing I had trouble with were the geese around the post. I couldn't figure out any way to sample those things other than try and get an estimate on them. Maybe that didn't even work. There was a tremendous population of geese. I think the habitat that was initially there is no longer there. There may be a different type of habitat now and not suitable anymore for very many, anyway.

Jim: I think that is right. The people now don't really have a good vision of those clouds of geese that were out there. They just aren't there. I remember trying to count ducks. You were looking through a screen of flying geese and trying to do a duck count and you just mentioned the geese in passing. Even when I was still doing surveys out there in the early 1980's, it wasn't like that at all. They do have some of the geese coming back now, the Cacklers, particularly. The Brant and the Emperors seem to be down from what they were when we were first out there. I don't know what the answer is. They still like to hunt. Around Nelson Island, they shoot an awful lot of Emperor geese as they are coming back in the spring.

Dave: The Emperor geese find their way out to the Aleutians during the winter.

Jim: You and Karl Kenyon started trying to tabulate the Emperor geese when you were doing sea otters out there.

Dave: We had about four observers in the airplane and we were assigned different things. One guy would do sea otters, one guy would do geese, one guy would do sea lions, and the other guy would do whatever. We were in a DC-3. I was one observer and also the co-pilot. I would fly the airplane and Smith would fly it on the right side. One guy was standing in back of each of us and another guy in back on a table recording.

Jim: I was on one of those counts with you guys and I always remembered Karl Kenyon sitting there in the aisle between the pilot and the co-pilot on a bar stool. He was needling Smith all the time about how much the trip was costing him and all he had to sit on was a barstool. I think Smitty would laugh about it but it got him thinking about developing the Super Goose. He wanted to get rid of Kenyon's complaints and he really did that with the Super Goose.

Dave: That brings to mind another accident there in Andrews Lagoon at Adak. I had been out on a survey flight that Kenyon had arranged. They were coming back in and Kenyon was a WWII pilot. He knew what was going on. They came in over this lagoon

and Kenyon said he was going to try and touch this thing down at this speed which would have been a disaster. About this time he hit and rolled the airplane up in a ball and Kenyon and two or three others survived somehow and the rest were killed. You hit the water going too fast with a seaplane, that's bad news.

Jim: I remember Kenyon talking about that. They took him to the hospital there at the Navy base. He had to swim ashore but he wasn't hurt. He was bumped up a little. They kept him in the hospital for several days and then they were going to send him back to Anchorage. They gave him a bill for \$3.00 a day or something like that. He got absolutely furious. He wasn't going to pay \$3.00 a day for staying in the Navy's hospital when it was their swamp that he was in. They had to go to the top of the pecking order there in the hospital and find an officer in charge to let Kenyon go without paying.

Another thing that I remember down from the 50's was I think most of us, especially the ones doing some law enforcement, was we tried to be a little standoffish with the sportsmen's groups and conservation groups. I remember you suddenly turned up as a Director of the Alaska Conservation Society. One by one, a whole batch of your refuge managers wound up involved with the Alaska Conservation Society and starting new chapters in Kodiak and Kenai. Do you have any memories about how you got involved with this society? Would it have been when they were starting to get ready to blow up Amchitka that you would have gotten involved?

Dave: Yes. I was involved in that Amchitka thing from one end to the other. We had a crew of four that alternated out there. There was one research man and one refuge man on the Island at all times. They alternated, week on, week off. I had to go out there a good bit anyway. For one thing, on sea otter counts which I did for quite a while and then somebody by the name of Estes took those over. That started in 1950. The refuge was established in 1913. There was a clause in there that said that you couldn't interfere with military operations. Be that as it may, they wanted to go out there and shoot off this bomb. I told them that they couldn't do this, it would kill off all the animals. In about

1950, they gave us \$50,000 and told us to go out and get the sea otter out of there. We took their money and went out there but it didn't work out, of course.

Jim: You did get a few of them moved though, didn't you – to British Columbia?

Dave: That was a lot later. We couldn't keep them alive. We finally figured out that they had to have running water. We moved seven of them over to the Pribilof Islands. I think we moved some out to Attu. About that time, the State got jurisdiction and they moved in where we left off. They also took credit for figuring out how to do it.

Jim: There is getting to be some worries about sea otters in Southeast now; how they are spreading. They eat crabs and that bothers people.

Dave: We had a little cabin off Day Harbor out of Seward. We would get sea otter in there - Valdez oil spill and all, we still get them in there.

Jim: They are doing well in Glacier Bay and around Sitka.

Dave: I guess they can eat themselves out of a house and home.

Jim: Another thing that I was wanting to ask you about was when you were supervisor of the refuges and really had a going refuge operation. At some point, you had to move to Anchorage to keep up with it. Then after Statehood and the drawdown of Fish and Wildlife personnel, you became the Wildlife Administrator for the whole operation.

Dave: I had an office in the Cordova Building. I was up fairly high and it faced toward the mountains. There was a time there when the Fish and Wildlife Service had a very low presence here in Alaska.

Jim: During that period, I had waterfowl money for the duck surveys and things. It seemed like it would be a good idea to try some eagle counts there in Southeast but I

didn't know how to do that with waterfowl money so I called you up. I still remember, I asked if you thought it would be all right if I did some eagle counts and I remember you saying, "I think that would be a damn good idea." That was Fred Robards and I that started out doing Admiralty Island and that helped of course getting Admirably established as a National monument. We did some sampling. You helped me with that too. We determined that there were probably around 1,000 eagle nests on that one Island. That is when there weren't a thousand eagle nests anywhere else in America. That was another function, perhaps of your training in forestry that got us all thinking about sampling.

Dave: One thing that really impressed me was Robards devised this method for capturing eagles with a snare. He would see an eagle in a tree and he would bring out his snare and he would have that eagle in short order.

Jim: He would put some styrofoam and a herring and then sew a snare into it some way or another so when the eagle came down to get the herring, it would catch his toes. That was pretty clever and then he would have an eagle on the end of his fishing rod. That would cause some commotion. Eagles aren't very easy things to handle. He did get caught once; one got him in the wrist. He couldn't get it off. Sid Morgan was there and he couldn't get it off either. They had some pliers and they got the pliers behind the claws on the eagle. Fred pulled from one direction and Sid pulled from the other and they managed to break the grip.

Dave: I once caught a live turkey when I was working in Missouri. I grabbed him by the legs and they have these big long spurs. He cut my hand right down through the middle. My hand got infected and I almost lost it. It was not a good experience.

Jim: Well, it looks like my tape is about to run out again. This is fun. Maybe we could try another session tomorrow and finish talking about some personalities. I would like to hear you talk a little about Dave Hickok and the things you did with him. That was important, after you got Fish and Wildlife straightened out.

--end of Side A, Tape 2—

--start of Side B, Tape 2—

Continuing with the oral history with Dave Spencer, October 28, 1999.

Jim: This is the 28<sup>th</sup> day of October and I'm back in Dave's living room, picking up where we left off yesterday. I have a little editorial that I want to put in here first.

When I tell people that I've been in Alaska 50 years, a lot of times the reaction is "oh, you must have seen a lot of changes," sort of implying that something is lost that was here 50 years ago. You probably have heard that too. I got to thinking, 50 years ago, there was a big effort among our politicians, Earnest Gruening, and Bob Bartlett to abolish the Moose Range so farming could develop on the Kenai and get rid of the bears on Kodiak so the ranchers could prosper. Heinselman(??) the chief forester in Southeast was trying to get pulp mills moving up so they could clear the trees off the islands in Southeast. Since that time, we've watched the trumpeter swans get restored pretty well, the musk ox and the sea otters. We've seen at least three really grand ecological studies related to the Cape Thompson project and the Amchitka project and then the Rampart project. These all stimulated enormous wildlife efforts. Also the establishment of 50 million acres of refuges in 1980 in the Lands Act. I got to thinking that those are all the things that Dave Spencer worked on.

You, Dave, had a hand in every one of those and many more dramatic events during the last 50 years in Alaska. Then I began to wonder – you told me the other day about your association with the Craighead's and Murie, Al Hauckbaum, Starker Leopold and his dad, Aldo. These are all famous names now of people that helped turn conservation around. I thought, gosh, you probably were involved with them in developing their views on land management and wilderness and that's what you brought to Alaska when you



came along with the amphibious airplane and statistics. You got involved with the fledging conservation organizations also that were developing in Alaska.

Dave: That's about right. I guess it was just an evolving process of my educational background and then WWII came along. I got out of the Navy and Starker Leopold was down in Mexico and he invited me down there when I was released. I went with him to Southern Mexico. We were within walking distance of the Guatemala border in the jungle there. We collected birds. Starker was a professor at the University of California. There were several in our party, one by the name of Chester Lamb who had spent his life collecting birds in Mexico. He collected them for a private collector. We would go out very early in the morning and we would go hunting and shoot whatever we saw. They had a permit for a single barreled shotgun. That is what we used. We would bring our kill back in and sit there in a tent with card tables and prepare these study skins.

Well, I prepared a lot of the study skins at the University of Michigan so I was very adept at preparing these things. Chester checked our lab. He was a professional. He would be talking away and apparently not looking at what he was doing and about every minute or so he would produce a study skin. He said, "well, I can produce a \$1 study skin or a \$10 study skin; just depends on what they want." He had an Indian there who did all his work. We had hired this pack train and we got in there, I think it was Camp Peachy. To get into the backcountry there, we engaged a twin engine airplane that looked something like one of our old bamboo bombers.

This guy loaded five of us in there along with 1500 pounds of our gear. We started off into the high country there. This guy would go right through clouds without any concern. Every once in a while, I would look out and there would be a peak sticking up there and I thought "oh, my God!" I didn't know what he was navigating by. He was to take back a load of chickley – this came in blocks about a foot square. They were heavy. They made chewing gum out of them. The pack train came with this load of chickley. These guys were fully armed, with guns on each hip. One of them had a WWII automatic 45 caliber and the thing was cocked. I was waiting for him to blow his leg off but he never did.

They delivered the chickley. It was counted out and then they sat under the wing of the airplane and counted out stacks and stacks of Paso's. It was all in silver(??) Paso's. They didn't deal with paper money.

I know I go off on these tangents instead of answering your questions ---

Jim: I thought it would be nice if you could say a little bit about being a student of Aldo Leopold. His words are so widely quoted nowadays that practically everybody has heard of Aldo Leopold. You were his student for a whole year, weren't you?

Dave: It was quite a long time. This was an outgrowth of my association with his son, Starker which began in Missouri. Starter pushed me to go and study with his father when I got back from Mexico. So I did. At that time, he held fort on a residence on the exit of the campus there at the University of Wisconsin. He had a personal library that included everything written on wildlife and wildlife management. I quickly discovered that he arrived at 7:00 o'clock in the morning so I did that too. I read everything he had in a course of some six months there.

We would take field trips on the weekend. Once we went out to hear the drumming of the snipe and watched them doing their antics. He had a shack or shrine out in the country where he had a few acres. He was applying the theories on his acres there as far as restoring it to wildlife habitat. The shack was simply that, two rooms. I remember staying over night there more than once. He would take students out there periodically. Everybody would get up early in the morning and go out and identify the birds and listen to them.

I was on a GI bill that didn't provide much money but that did enable me to get through that. Summer came and like most veterans, I guess, I got restless and I had to go somewhere. I took off in my battered old car and headed out west.

Aldo had given me a letter to Olaus Murie. I took this letter to Murie. I stayed there on his ranch for some time. The Craighead brothers were there too. They were working on the flowers at Teton National Park. They were photographing these flowers and writing them up, etc. When I got out there, I had to have employment. I was out of money. I applied to the Wyoming Game Commission. I got a job there. I think I already told you this.

Jim: Yes. I do have a couple of questions. Was Leopold lecturing then or was your association with him more casual? Was he discussing his views on land management and game management?

Dave: He would lecture to his small class; just a few people. He had an assistant there, Bob McCabe, who was quite a faithful assistant. He did everything he could to help Leopold. He would lecture there then he would make these trips out to the field with his students and lecture them there too.

I liked him very much. He was very personable and patient, a nice man. When Eloise came up here, she had to go right by where he was so I told her stop in and see Dr. Leopold. She did stop, however, it was a very bad time, he had just died. I did get pretty well acquainted with Mrs. Leopold. She was a very nice Spanish lady from Santa Fe.

Jim: Did you write a thesis or report or something for Leopold?

Dave: I had a master's degree from the University of Michigan and I had written a thesis there for my masters which had to do with potholes in Southern Michigan. There I studied under Professor Whythen(?), Professor Graham and Professor Rory(?) I have two degrees in forestry.

Jim: Then when you got around Olaus Murie, he was already starting to get involved with the Wilderness Society. At that time, the forestry people in Southeast were talking about eliminating the wilderness. It is interesting, Frank Heinselman(?) did get the two

pulp mills to Southeast. He wanted to have one more which was going to be in Juneau and U.S. Champion Plywood had the contract for it and they got a contract with Starker Leopold to do a wildlife study. Presumably, they thought this would show that logging off all the islands there would do no harm. Starker was in Juneau and I talked to him when he came up to set this study up. A student named Regg Barrett, who was one of Starker's good students, spent a year in Southeast and as a result of that study, the third pulp mill was never built. Starker had a hand in saving us there!

Dave: Starker and Fraser Darling went on a trip with me. We went to Nunivak and all over out there. They wrote a book about Alaska. We came down the coast there and got to Dillingham. We stopped in there and stayed overnight. The next morning, Jay Hammond was there and we had breakfast with him. A funny thing, about two-three years ago, I was at a meeting where Jay was and I said, "hi, Jay, I'm Dave Spencer." He said, "say, you remember that time we had breakfast with Starker Leopold and that ecologist there at Dillingham?" We went from there down to one of the big lakes there and camped on the shore of that. We poked around in the vegetation there.

Jim: I think Jay continues to have a warm feeling about his years with the Fish and Wildlife Service but he doesn't dare talk about it too much because he was killing wolves. I see him every now and then. He comes through Juneau and he stays with Judge Stewart who is a good friend.

Dave: He describes his experiences in the Navy. He went the same route that I did, pre flight school and all that. Jay would get out there and march the troops up and down and have them turning just right. If I had to march to the mess hall, I couldn't hardly manage that at all. Somehow or the other, I scraped through. He went through as a battalion leader. We had to study Navy tradition. We went through classes of algebra, geometry, two-hour classes, and you got it or you were on your way. They didn't wait around for you.

Jim: Another guy I wanted to ask you about was, after you retired from Fish and Wildlife you went to work for the University of Alaska with Dave Hickok. He was developing a lot of information about Alaska lands and Alaska Natives. Could you tell me a little bit about Dave Hickok. You were involved in all that, I think. Those were very influential reports that he put out.

Dave: My association with Hickok began in Portland, I think. I may be wrong about this but he spent some time in the refuge division and then he went to be a congressional advisor to Senator Musky, I think. There were quite a lot of organizations that he was a member of. Finally, he started the Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center. That's where I came into this picture.

I retired from the Fish and Wildlife in 1976 and he employed me right off the bat. I worked there until 1985. He had a lot of ideas on how things should go. He was interested in putting these across. He would give these assignments to me and my office mate there, Sal \_\_\_\_\_. Sal was a Vietnam veteran, a lieutenant – that's the guy that goes first, you know, and he was lucky to get out alive. He was a brilliant fellow. You really wouldn't know it from the way he dressed. They determined he was the best qualified for Hickok's job when he left.

Jim: Those documents that you guys turned out there had a lot to do with Alaska Native Land Claims legislation.

Dave: Hickok was responsible for a lot of that legislation. I don't think even the Natives realize this that he was responsible for some of the favorable conditions that they operate under now. It was pretty interesting. He would send me off on assignments. Some of them were over my head and I couldn't do them very well. Once he sent me down to Kodiak on that Terror Lake project. They were going to impound Terror Lake. It supplies electricity for the City of Kodiak. It was my chore, along with one or two others to go down there and assess the environmental impact. There was a nice camp there right

on the beach. There were quite a few of us to begin with but finally dwindled down to me and Hensel, a cook and a helper.

Jim: That was a pretty dramatic thing to be a part of. Did they build that dam? There were some adjustments that you guys recommended that made it a lot less offensive than it looked like it was going to be initially. After you got through with that, you kept up an interest in the bear business with the Kodiak Brown Bear Trust.

Dave: I finally decided that my hearing was so bad that I couldn't tell what was going on at the meetings so I resigned after 10 years of it. Dave Cline was the chairman. I was replaced by the refuge manager there at Kodiak, Jay Bellinger. He is a very competent guy. He has managed that whole complex down there at Kodiak very well over the years. He has been there quite a while.

Jim: A lot of the bear refuge was given away during the Native Land Claims. I think quite a lot of it has been put back together now as different sources of revenue became available - federal money and oil spill money, etc.

Another thing that I wanted to ask you about was when you started looking up the records on the Aleutian Islands, you were writing a history of the Aleutian Island Refuge and somehow you determined that all the records were in Denver, Colorado.

Dave: Somebody in Salyer's office gathered up all these records and shipped the whole works to the Denver Municipal Library because he knew they would be safe there. Otherwise, they would have gone into the Federal Records Center in St. Louis and eventually be all shredded up. I went down there and spent a week digging through those things. They had everything – carbon copies dating way back; memo's from Salyer.

Jim: Were the records also for other refuges, the Kenai, Kodiak, and others?

Dave: Yes, I think the whole business was there but at that time I was mainly interested in the Aleutians and those are the ones that I dug into.

Jim: I wonder if there would be records there of that original Yukon Delta Sanctuary that went back to Teddy Roosevelt's time.

Dave: I'm sure it would be there. You would have to go way back on that.

Jim: I asked around a little at one time about where E.W. Nelson's notes on birds would have gone. Nobody seems to know where they are. All his meticulous notes on Eskimo's are in the Smithsonian but not the bird notes. The people like to make the statement that when the Migratory Bird Treaty Act was passed, it left the Eskimo's out. Nelson was the first one to describe birds on the Yukon Delta and western Alaska. He was the Biological Survey Director when the Treaty was passed. You have to think that they were probably left out on purpose. He and Lucian Turner talked about being afraid of what would happen when all the Native people of western Alaska got guns. They were doing pretty well with their bird hunting apparently without guns. It would be really interesting to see Nelson's notes about that period of time.

Dave: As you know, you could get plenty of birds out there without having guns at certain times of the year. I suppose that is what he was referring to. There are other times of the year when things are kind of lean, too.

Jim: He was a little worried about the Emperor geese. I got a quote from some book that stated that until this sanctuary was set up by Roosevelt in about 1910, it lasted for 20 years and then it was abolished by Warren Harding the same way, by Executive Order.

Dave: The Kenai and Kodiak Refuges wouldn't be there now if it hadn't been for the efforts of Ira Gabrielson. He gave us the "*Birds of Alaska*." He spent quite a bit of time up here and traveled around. Among some of the collection of letters that I ran across in Denver was one saying that while he had brought up this question to the President about

the establishment of the Kenai and Kodiak Refuges, he said, “I think I am going to get this through.” He was a personal friend of the President. He did get it through. He knew the areas very well from his travels but as far as I know, nobody has recognized that since. Without his efforts, they wouldn’t even be there. Hazen Bay came into play there somewhere also. Later they proposed Izembek, Arctic, and the Yukon Delta. I remember working with several people drawing up the boundaries of what we considered the essential wildlife habitats in Alaska. We delineated these things. We spent lots of time doing this and then it got into the ANILCA process and our finely drawn lines went out the window. There were sweeping withdrawals all over the place – about half of Alaska that we hadn’t even visualized anything like this. Those of us who initially worked on it had spent all these years trying our best to hang on to what we had. We couldn’t visualize the possibility of any big withdrawals like that – impossible.

Jim: One of my memories is talking to you about proposing new refuges. I remember you telling me that it was a good idea to think about areas that ought to be refuges but that there was no way we were going to get any new ones with the politicians that we had at that time. That is when I wrote you up a report on Cape Newenham. You stuck it away but it came up pretty quick. That was another thing, when I sent you my report, I think it was 165,000 acres. When I talked to you about it, you asked me how we could cut it down a little and make it more realistic. Ten years later, we didn’t talk about refuges in anything less than million-acre chunks!

You had a close association with Clarence Rhode in developing refuge plans and schemes. I worry a little about Clarence. His name has sort of disappeared from Alaska. He was such a vital person there.

Dave: We had a high regard for Clarence. Once I was at a meeting that I think John Preccheaded(??) had summoned on his place in Montana. It included a bunch of these conservation big wigs. There were five of us signed up there. We all had to make a speech on the great wonders of conservation. I selected Clarence. I said, the man I am going to talk about is really not the savior of wolves, but one thing he believed in was



refuges. He eventually lost his life in the Arctic trying to show politicians and influence them how important the refuge was.

Jim: He was a dynamic person. He was a team builder. He tried to fit people into niches where they were productive and he was very supportive of his people. At that time, all the airplanes were “pooled.” You never knew which one you were going to have. I have that 180 when I was there working on the refuge at Bethel. I took it to Juneau with me when I went down there to go with the waterfowl project. Nobody ever asked for it back. I got a lot of good use out of it.

Dave: Good. I’m glad somebody did! Which reminds me about the early days when I came up here and the Aircraft Division set me up with a Wigeon. John Ball brought it up here then later on, I said, “this doesn’t work in the winter,” and they sent me out for a Cub which wasn’t much good. When I got to Anchorage, I turned up at the Fish and Wildlife Service downtown where Holgar Larsen was. Since I was oriented toward aircraft, I went out to Hood Lake, a kind of torturous road out there before you finally got to the Lake. There I found that the Fish and Wildlife had a plot of ground on the lake but no buildings. The closest thing to an aircraft division was Slim Bragg, who was also a game agent. He had a Fairchild 14; a 4-place affair on floats and skis. There was no road connecting Kenai and Anchorage at that time. He said, “I know where that place is down there and if you want, I’ll run you down and we’ll look at them.” So, away we go. He landed in the Kenai River. There was a Native kid standing there watching for him. The tide was coming in. We went up and looked at the house and we went on our way again. That was the “aircraft division” in those days – Slim Bragg and the old Fairchild.

Jim: It would have been shortly thereafter that Theron Smith came and really started developing the aircraft operation.

Dave: Theron was running and operating the Northern Consolidated operation out of Bethel. Somebody employed him as the aircraft director of Fish and Wildlife Service here. He took over and then managed to build a hangar and got people in out of the cold.

Soon after, he employed Tom Wardleigh as the shop supervisor. He also did an awful lot of flying. I see Tom every once in a while.

Jim: You mentioned Holgar Larsen. One of the things that I remember about Holgar – they called him the “howling dane.” He had this affinity for gathering military surplus property. He probably got a lot of stuff for you at Kenai.

Dave: Yes, you could get an authorization through him and go on out there and paw through their tons of junk. Once in a while, you would find something useful. Our first light plant down at Kenai was what we called a “little demon.” It was a single cylinder device hitched up to a generator and operated with a pull cord. It had a two hour gas supply. We would fire that up in the evening and we would have a couple of lights burning there in the house. Then in a couple of hours, I would have to go out and fill it up with gas again.

Finally, there was some sort of break through and I got a bunch of stuff from Kodiak. I went down there and I gathered up everything in sight, including a brand new 6-cylinder gasoline generator with all the spare parts that you would ever need, along with a couple of trucks that would barely run. There were some pacific hut buildings that we had to tear down ourselves. We finally loaded all this stuff onto a barge which was operated then by Jimmy Peterson’s brother-in-law. He ran a barge up Cook Inlet from Kodiak. It was about this time of year and he brought the barge up and delivered the whole mess on the beach there at Kenai.

--end of Side B, Tape 2—

--start of Side A, Tape 1—

October 28, 1999

--Continuing oral history interview with Dave Spencer—

Jim: We have been talking about various personalities. One of the people you had on this list you gave me, Dave, was Carlos Carson. I think I remember meeting him once. He was an interesting fellow that had been in Dillingham.

Dave: He was out on the Alaska Peninsula as a game agent. Then he got transferred to Seward. I don't have anything spectacular to say about Carlos except that I did work with him a bit. This was kind of unusual for a biologist to be concerned with law enforcement. I guess he was intrigued by that. He told me about bear hunting on the Kenai Peninsula. He said, "I never carried anything but a 25-35, when they stand up, you shoot them right in the throat or you shoot them between the eyes." He was a small, sort of an aggressive fellow. He and his wife had a modest little house there in Seward. I don't know what happened to him. Most of these people, they pass on, you never hear of them again.

Jim: That was interesting. At that time there hadn't been any biologists in the Fish and Wildlife Service regularly in Alaska. Everything was done by the game agents who were good bushwhackers but didn't have any training.

Dave: Dan Ralston was an assistant to Clarence Rhode as a deputy regional director. Dan had quite a bit of experience up here. He had been around on the Kenai and various places and knew what was going on.

Jim: Yes, Dan was a law enforcement supervisor and then he became deputy regional director.

Dave: Then there was Bob Scott who came on the scene as a biologist. He was one of the smart lads. That's where the statistics business came in. Scott wandered around for a while and finally he wound up in the Washington Office. First thing I knew, he was the Chief of the entire refuge system. He brought on this "systems management." This is the guy that put it into effect. We experimented with that for a couple of years and

discovered that it absolutely would not work so they finally dropped that. I don't know where Bob and Rita are now.

Jim: They are down on Orca Island in the San Juan Islands. I called him up last winter and I was going to go over and try and get his memories of Fish and Wildlife days up here. They were isolated on that Island because a ferry had rammed the dock and wiped it out. He indicated that he would like to do that but there wasn't anyway for me to get there. I am going to try and meet with him later. He spent quite a few years in Fairbanks. I flew around with him some. Then he was at the University.

Another person you have on your list is Jim Scott of BLM. He was a pretty enlightened conservationist too, I think.

Dave: Yes. He passed away now too long ago. I wrote up a thing when I got the news of his passing. I call it "*Journey's with Jim.*" There were a lot of little episodes that no one knew anything about but Jim and I. I got acquainted with him very soon after we got here. He was making his rounds as a forest guard and he heard about this new refuge manager so he stopped in and visited with us. From then on, he was a close associate and friend. We did a lot of things together. I had been flying all around one day and I got home about 7:00 o'clock in the evening. He called and said, "there's a fire reported over on the Stony River, can you come down and pick me up and take me over?"

I went down and got him, along with Jess Willard and all the fire gear they could stuff in the back of the Wigeon and away we went. We got over on the other side of the Range and there was smoke all over the place. You couldn't see anything. We somehow got over on the Mulchatna River and I thought I would follow it on down to Dillingham and regroup and start over again the next day. I began to get worried about gas. I was hugging the Mulchatna pretty close in case I had to make an over land there to the Nushagak, but we didn't, we got to Dillingham. When we got there it was 3:00 o'clock in the morning. Somehow we got to town, we may have walked.

The only place open was a honky-tonk. We went in there and here were these Eskimos whooping it up having a great time there in the dance hall. I saw right away that we couldn't do anything there and we just might as well wait until daylight. He summoned a DC-3 load of firefighters which they had gathered up on the streets of Anchorage and they came out. He also hired a group of Native women. He said they were the best workers. He said they did all the heavy lifting and the buck's just sat around and bitched.

I was needing some sleep. I had been going for 30 hours or more and I was beat, I couldn't go any more. There was an Air Force site that they maintained. It was about 85 degrees in there. I lay there and sweated for a while and finally gave it up. I got out there in time to see Jim receiving this DC-3 load of fire fighters from Anchorage. He fancied himself a Smokey Bear hat, hard brimmed. He was striding up and down in front of these guys and he said to them "you'll be in there until that fire is out!"

Later they were on the fire line and this Native guy comes running up jabbering away. Jim had a person that could interpret their language. Jim asked, "what is he saying?" The interpreter said "him say, long way smoke." He had been talking for five minutes but all the interpreter would say was "long way smoke."

Jim: When I met Harry Crandall, he was working with Congressman Dingell. He had been in the refuge division at some time.

Dave: Harry Crandall had spirited all these papers out there. I have a picture on the shore of Frazer Lake in the Arctic and there is Harry, amongst others.

Jim: Cal Lensink and I went back to put together banding records and survey records at the start of the D-2 National Interest thing. We were told it was at the request of Congressman Dingell but it probably would have been at the request of Harry Crandall instead. We had an interesting time back there. That's when I met him, although he later showed up in Juneau a few times working on the National Interest Lands bill.

Dave: Once along the way, I had to escort Congressman Dingell around. It was up just outside of a pipeline camp. He had brought all his fishing gear with him. We had to go fishing. We went out to this river which I didn't think contained any fish. He went out fully attired – creel, 44 magnum on his hip, fly rods, fly boxes and everything else that one would have for a major fishing expedition. We fished for an hour or so and never got a bite. I thought at the time that there wasn't a darn fish in that river but I didn't want to say this in front of Bob Smith.

Jim: Gosh, Bob must be getting pretty old by now, probably pushing 90.

Dave: But, these flyway biologists last a long time. George Saunders is into his 90's now. I hear from him pretty regularly.

Jim: Bruce Conant and I have talked several times about that the fact that there never has been a flyway biologist killed in an airplane when they were doing wildlife stuff. There was J.D. Smith killed in a helicopter. It was proven that the helicopter had not been put together right. Nobody has dumped an airplane, so far.

Dave: All those thousands of hours of flying at 200 feet, is really quite intriguing.

Jim: Something about flying low makes people a little sharper or a little more careful or something. You would think there would be some engine failures or something. I think there were a few but not sudden ones.

Dave: I remember I ran out of gas when I was showing the Director, I think it was Al Day, around the Yukon Flats and what a great place that was for duck nesting. I was down close reeling around this way and that way looking at ducks and all of a sudden, the engine quit. I had forgotten to change gas tanks. I quick switched the gas tanks. My companion there said, "I never saw anybody move so fast in my life." It was probably true. I was still aiming for a small puddle of water. I knew I'd never make it but quickly switching the gas tanks was successful.

Jim: I remember doing that a time or two with a Beaver. Before the engine would quit, there was a little red light that appeared on the panel to tell you that you should switch tanks. If you were looking out counting ducks or something, you weren't looking where the little red light was. I registered a complaint with Jerry Lawhorn. The next time I had my airplane in the shop he mounted a light bulb on the doorpost. That thing was so bright, even if I was looking into the sun I could feel the heat of it. I never ran a tank dry again! That was one of the neat things that the aircraft division could do for us.

Another one of the old timers from those days was Pete Nelson. Did you have any dealings with him? I got the feeling that perhaps his major role was advising Clarence Rhode on wildlife things.

Dave: I invited Pete to go moose hunting once. We went down to Skilak on that western beach there. We walked back in a ways where there were some lakes. Out on the peninsula that extended into those lakes were a couple of moose. I suggested to Pete to see if he could get on the peninsula and sneak down and get one of them. He elected to do that and away he went. He got down there a ways and I guess he felt he was close enough but actually, he was a long shot away. He fired away at this moose and the moose started to move off and he hollered at me and at this point, I was closer to the moose than he was. He yelled, "knock him down, knock him down!" Which I did, I knocked him down. Somehow or the other we got the thing to the lake and packed it out of there.

Jim: Pete Nelson didn't like to have much to do with airplanes as I recall. He was sort of scared of flying, even on airliners. Ruth, his wife, is still active down in Juneau.

Dave: I liked Pete. His colleague there was Bud Elkins,

Jim: I didn't have many dealings with them. I was a game agent during those years that they were there. We all knew everybody.

Dave: There was a “Federal Aid to Wildlife” program, the Pittman-Robertson Act that they were involved in.

Jim: Well, I think it is time to give this machine and both of us a rest. I think it has been really fun to sit here and talk with you, Dave, and remember some of these people and some of these incidents.

I talk to Sig Olson and Sid Morgan every now and then. They both are in Juneau. We talk about those years in the 50’s and what a great period that was in our lives. There was so much enthusiasm. We were kind of our own best friends. We were all working together.

Dave: Yes, we didn’t have too much contact with the Washington Office. We operated out of manuals and asking, “what should we do about this or that” and we’d get the manual out and see.

Jim: Now people pop back and forth to Washington at the drop of a hat. For a number of years anybody that wanted to have a paper done at the North American gave it to John Buckley. He took care of all the papers for everybody in Alaska because nobody else could get travel authorization. I think he did some of your papers.

Dave: I wasn’t very prolific in writing professional papers but I was involved with a lot of them.

John Buckley went to Nunivak with me once. We were cruising along out there and the fog closed in out on the coast. I didn’t want to fly all the way back to Bethel so I decided to just put it on this lake and camp for the night. I landed on this big lake and low and behold, the water was about a foot deep. I got out of the airplane, looking for deeper water. I went to taxi over to deeper water and promptly wound up on a rock that tore a hole in the bottom. We were in the Wigeon. Of course it quickly filled up with water.



For 9 hours, we worked at putting a patch on this thing. I had patching stuff, canvas, hand drills, etc. John got the brunt of it. He had to get out in the cold water and reach under there. He would hold the patch up and I would drill a hole through there and stick a bolt through it and then he would have to try and get a nut on it.

Finally, we got the patch on – after 9 hours – and of course the plane had all this water in it. We got a bucket and bailed the water out as much as we could. We took off and I had to land Old Chevak. There was sharp bend in the river with a cut bank. I tied up to this bank and quickly I could see this plane was going to sink if I wasn't careful. I grabbed the bucket and bailed like crazy. I have often thought since then that the best bilge pump in the world is a scared man with a bucket! That was me. I quick jumped on the controls and fired it up and roared down the channel there and just got it in the air and got it over to Nunivak and up on the beach. At that time, there was a radioman who was kind of an expert on everything. He was a cripple. He looked at it and said, "no problem, we'll put a good patch on it." He had all the tools he needed and he did put a good patch on it.

Jim: The Wigeon didn't have compartments in the hull.

Dave: It had a compartment in the back, one in the bow, and the rest would hold a lot of water, which is kind of an interesting thing, you know. Tom Wardleigh came tearing up the Inlet one day in a Goose and he said, "Dave, I have a halibut here for you." I said, "fine, throw it in the bow of the Wigeon and I'll come over and get it." We were talking on the radio. He did this and then I promptly forgot it for several days. It kind of spoiled in the hot sun there. He reminds me that every once in a while.

Jim: It's time to close here Dave.

Dave: It has been a lot of fun talking with you, Jim, talking over these old times. I suppose most of us are beginning to forget after a time.

Jim: Well, some of the things come back after you start discussing them. You brought up some things that I hadn't thought about for years.

Mary Smith will transcribe these tapes all in due course. I talked to her the other day on the telephone and she said, "well, you know I do these things at my own pace, I didn't promise to get them out right now."

Dave: Well, she is undertaking quite a chore there. I guess it is for our benefit and I sure thank her a lot for going to this trouble.

Jim: Well, I think they are paying her. She is retired now and she is doing it more as a labor of love than for the amount of money she gets. She's a good Service booster.

Dave: I'm sure she is. She outlasted many Regional Directors. She is a very charming, gracious lady.

Jim: Thank you, Dave, so much.

--end of Side A, Tape 3--

--end of interview--

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*P.S. Transcriber's Note:*

*It was certainly my honor and privilege to have known and worked with Dave from 1971 until he retired from the Service. I would see or talk with him occasionally after that. He always had time to say hello or to visit. Dave contributed so much in shaping the Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska as we know it today. Thank you, Dave. May God be with you.*